

REMARKS

Claims 1-22 are pending in the application.

The Office made final an earlier rejection of claims 1-9, 11-16, and 18-22 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Griffin, et al. 6,248,447.

Independent claims 1, 11, and 18 have been amended now to specify that the substrate is a tungsten carbide substrate, as described in the specification.

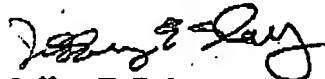
Applicant believes that claims 1, 11, and 18, as amended, now preclude the structure described by Griffin, et al. 6,248,447, and are therefore allowable. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests allowance of claims 1, 11, and 18.

Applicant further believes claims 10 and 17, finally rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being anticipated by Griffin, et al. 6,248,447, and the remaining dependent claims 2-9, 12-16, and 19-22 are now allowable, as they depend from allowable base claims. Therefore, allowance of dependent claims 2-9, 12-16, and 19-22 is also requested.

In view of the amendments and remarks made herein, Applicant respectfully submits that the application is now in condition for allowance. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests that this amendment be entered and that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

It is believed that there are no fees due at this time. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees that may be required at any time during the prosecution of this application without specific authorization, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account 180584. If there are any questions concerning the above, please contact the undersigned at 832-681-8623. Please note that this contact telephone number will change to 281-878-5658 on 23-August-2004.

Respectfully submitted,


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